

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 9 and 21 are pending. The Examiner indicated in her Office Action that they were allowed. Cancellation of the other claims moots their rejection. Claims 8, 11-18 and 20 are canceled solely to prevent delay in allowance of the pending claims; they are being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer to their prosecution in a future application. The amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure and, thus, no new matter is added by their entry. Amendment will reduce the issues on appeal by mooted the only remaining grounds for rejection.

Having fully responded to the pending Office Action, Applicants submit that the claims are in condition for allowance and earnestly solicit an early Notice to that effect. The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned if additional information is required.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: /Gary R. Tanigawa/

Gary R. Tanigawa
Reg. No. 43,180

901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100